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OPI Summary of OPI Activities for January

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Highlights of State Superintendent Linda McCulloch's Activities

Superintendent's Activities, December, 2005

Submitted by Helen Christensen on 1/3/06.

- Participated in the final meeting of the Quality Schools Interim Committee
- Participated in panel discussion on school funding at the Montana Taxpayers Association Annual Meeting
- Testified and responded to questions at legislative committee hearings regarding school funding bills during the 2005 Special Session
- Spoke to the "Stand Up for Education Rally" organized by Anaconda High School students
- Participated in a joint press conference on the school funding legislation that passed the Special Session
- Did several interviews with reporters from print, television and radio
- Attended annual OPI Staff Holiday Luncheon recognizing OPIers for their years of service to the State of Montana
- Addressed recipients of Indian Education for All Ready to Go Grants at their initial meeting
- Viewed the 56 Christmas trees decorated by Montana students
- Participated in the monthly meetings of the Land Board and the OPI Cabinet
- Received annual school trust lands revenue check for more than \$57 million from the Department of Natural Resources, which is part of already-established school funding determined by the Legislature
- Visited Bonner School
- Hosted OPI staff State Employees Charitable Giving Campaign drawing winners for lunch
- Hosted tea party for Helena Middle School student
- Turned another year older (ugh...)

For more information, contact [Helen Christensen](#), (406)444-5658.



Office of the State Superintendent

School controversy rules

Submitted by Bev Marlow on 12/30/05.

State Superintendent Linda McCulloch has amended several rules in the Administrative Rules of Montana, Title 10, Chapter 6 relating to school controversies. The proposed amendments were adopted without change and are effective December 23, 2005. The rule notice detailing the proposed amendments can be found at: <http://www.opi.mt.gov/LegalDivision/index.html>

A complete updated version of Title 10, Chapter 6 can be found at:
<http://www.opi.mt.gov/ARM/index.html>

For more information, contact [Bev Marlow](#), (406) 444-3172.

**Summary of December Special Session on School Funding**

Submitted by Madalyn Quinlan on 12/30/05.

During the 2-day special legislative session in December, the Legislature provided \$37 million in new ongoing funds and \$34.5 million in one time only funds for the Fiscal Year 2007. To assist with higher energy costs, \$2 million will be distributed on an ANB basis for the current fiscal year.

The staff at the Office of Public Instruction has prepared several documents to assist you to better understand the financial and program results of the Special Session.

A summary of funding decisions by both the 2005 Special and Regular Sessions can be found at <http://www.opi.mt.gov/pdf/SchoolFinance/05SpSsBudOffSum.pdf>

A description of all Special Session actions and which program funds will be affected can be found at <http://www.opi.mt.gov/pdf/SchoolFinance/05SpSsSummary.pdf>

We have also prepared a spreadsheet so that each school district can see how much money it will receive from the different ongoing and one time only components. The spreadsheet is at <http://www.opi.mt.gov/pdf/SchoolFinance/05SpSsPostBudEst.xls>

For more information, contact [Madalyn Quinlan](#), 406-444-3168.

**Bullying - Proposed Rule Changes**

Submitted by Kathy Bramer on 12/30/05.

The Board of Public Education approved the following policy on the issue of bullying in schools:

"MOTION: Ms. Myers moved that the Board of Public Education notice for hearing revisions to 10.55.701, 10.55.801 and 10.55.1003 and that the Board of Public Education require all Montana school districts to adopt and implement bullying, intimidation, and harassment prevention policies by May 2006 and to proactively address bullying prevention. A list of suggested district policy features that are consistent with this position statement will be attached to this motion and offered as a guide for districts. Mr. Fuller added a statement to the original motion that included an accountability mechanism to be provided to the Board of Public Education by January 2007 through the Office of Public Instruction. The motion was seconded by Mr. Fuller and unanimously carried."

It accordance with this policy, proposed changes to the ARM have been posted on the OPI website and can be found at <http://www.opi.mt.gov/pdf/legaldivision/10-55-237proarm.pdf> . A public hearing on the proposed rule changes is scheduled for January 23, 2006 at 9:00 a.m. in the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education conference room located in the New York Building, 46 North Last Chance Gulch, Helena, Montana. To get a copy of the suggested policy features referenced in the BPE motion or for other questions, contact Steve Meloy at the BPE, 406-444-6576, smeloy@bpe.montana.edu or Kathy Bramer at OPI, 406-444-3161, kbramer@mt.gov.

For more information, contact [Kathy Bramer](#), 406-444-3161.



January Board of Public Education Meeting

Submitted by Spencer Sartorius on 12/30/05.

The Board of Public Education will hold its next regular meeting January 12-13, 2006, at the Great Northern Hotel (Western Star Room), in Helena, Montana. Tentative agenda information items from the Office of Public Instruction include: the Superintendent's Report, an Assessment Update and NCLB, MACIE, Accreditation, Traffic Education and Special Education reports. Agenda action items include Accreditation issues. Contacts are Board of Public Education Executive Secretary Steve Meloy (444-0300) or Deputy Superintendent Bud Williams (444-7325).

For more information, contact [Bud Williams](#), 406-444-7325.



Education Data Warehouse and Student Information Systems

Submitted by Madalyn Quinlan on 12/30/05.

In November, OPI issued a Request for Proposals for a student information system, data warehouse, and special education reporting and information management system. The proposals are due from vendors by January 10, 2006. After the proposals are received, a nine member selection committee (including two school representatives) will review the proposals and select the vendors that will be invited back to demonstrate the products and services that are part of their proposal. The selection process for this major contract is expected to take several weeks. OPI hopes to award a contract to a vendor by early spring.

The RFP and addendum for OPI's information system is posted on the Department of Administration's website at

<http://www.discoveringmontana.com/doa/gsd/business/pdfdownloads/RFP06-12030.DOC> and
<http://www.discoveringmontana.com/doa/gsd/business/pdfdownloads/rfp06-120301add.doc>

For more information, contact [Dave Nagel](#), 406-444-1641.



Accreditation

E-Rate Audits

Submitted by Michael Hall on 12/30/05.

The Schools and Libraries Division of the Universal Services Administrative Company that runs the E-Rate program is conducting audits in Montana. Auditors come to the school district and review the technology plan, application, billing and financial records, professional development records, equipment inventories and labeling and interview administrators and teachers. Districts are responsible for paying back any funds received that do not withstand the audit process. For general audit information review <http://www.sl.universalservice.org/reference/> (select "Audits" from the list), or for specific audit information: <http://www.sl.universalservice.org/reference/AuditFactSheet.asp>

For more information, contact [Michael Hall](#), mhall@mt.gov.



E-Rate Application Window

Submitted by Michael Hall on 12/30/05.

The E-Rate application window for 2006-2007 funding opened on December 6, 2005 and will close on February 6, 2006. If you have questions concerning the approval of your district's technology plan for the E-Rate program, please consult the document "E-Rate Technology Plans Approved" on the OPI Web site at: <http://www.opi.mt.gov/ERate2.html>

For more information, contact [Michael Hall](#), 406-444-4422.



Assessment

Assessment Conference in May

Submitted by Gale Kramlick on 12/30/05.

The Office of Public Instruction will be hosting an assessment conference on May 1-2, 2006 at the Red Lion Colonial Hotel in Helena, Montana. The theme of the conference is "There's More to Assessment than Testing." This conference will include high quality breakout sessions, lively general sessions, and dynamic keynote speakers. The registration fee for the conference will be \$60 which includes a buffet breakfast and lunch both days. Registration will be limited to 400 and will begin in February 2006. More details about the conference will be available soon on our website at <http://www.opi.mt.gov>

For more information, contact [Sue Tinsley](#), (406)444-5643.



Career Technical & Adult Education

New FFA/American Indian Program offered

Submitted by Bill Jimmerson, OPI AgEd/FFA Specialist on 12/30/05.

The Montana FFA Association has announced a new program which will help educate students about the American Indian culture. The FFA Chapters on or near our Indian Reservations are encouraged to prepare a program on the local tribal culture and present the program to other schools in their area. All participating schools will be invited to present their programs at the State FFA Convention in Bozeman, March 29-April 1st with the top program winning a trip to the National FFA Convention in Indianapolis in October.

This new program is the brainchild of new AgEd/FFA Specialist, Bill Jimmerson. His office is located on the MSU campus in Bozeman.

For more information, contact [Bill Jimmerson](#), (406) 994-7050 .



Centralized Services

Educator Licensure

License Renewal Reminder

Submitted by Elizabeth Keller on 12/30/05.

As of January 1, Montana educators whose licenses expire June 30, 2006, can renew their licenses. Options for renewing still include online or paper application. However, official documents (i.e. official

transcripts, official grade reports or original renewal unit certificates) cannot be submitted electronically. They must be mailed or hand delivered to OPI in order for the renewal to take effect. Educators with expiring licenses have until August 31, 2006, to earn renewal credits (college credit or renewal units as appropriate). Educators taking courses in the Summer of 2006 should check with the university to be sure that the actual course grades will be posted to the summer transcript. Courses posted to the Fall 2006 transcript cannot be accepted for renewal of a license expiring June 30, 2006.

For more information, contact [Elizabeth Keller](#), (406)444-2580.



Program Assistant

Submitted by Elizabeth Keller on 12/30/05.

Educator Licensure would like to welcome Mr. Jue Sing to our department as the Licensure Program Assistant. Jue is retired from the state of Montana after 30 years of service. His hours are Monday through Friday, 10am to 2pm. Please join us in welcoming Jue.

For more information, contact [Elizabeth Keller](#), 406-444-2580.



Educational Opportunity & Equity Division

Health Enhancement and Safety

Meth Training in Lewistown January 11

Submitted by Gary Pfister on 12/30/05.

OPI and Montana State University will present the methamphetamine prevention resource for educators titled "Tools for Schools" at the Lewistown Yogo Inn on Wednesday, January 11, 2006 from 3:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. Tools for Schools is a resource to assist schools and youth leaders raise awareness and empower kids to make informed decisions about meth. It includes 10 easy-to-use PowerPoint presentations with detailed lesson plans for middle and high school students.

The training is designed for all personnel involved in health and prevention of risk behaviors in the public and private school systems, to include school nurses, health enhancement teachers, after-school network staff, and any interested school administrators and/or teaching staff. A CD with the 10 modules and lesson plans will be provided to participants.

Pre-registration is required by January 9 to assure adequate space and supplies, to Marion Erp, 444-1951 or merp@mt.gov. Announcements with registration forms were sent out to the Central and Hi Line MASS regions targeting school districts surrounding Lewistown. For more information contact Gary Pfister at 444-3000.

For more information, contact [Gary Pfister](#), 444-3000.



Meth Training Workshops in January

Submitted by Gary Pfister on 12/30/05.

The Office of Public Instruction, in conjunction with Kirk Astroth and Sandy Bailey, Montana State University, and Kathy Woodward, Yellowstone City-County Health Department Special Populations

Manager, will be presenting a series of methamphetamine prevention trainings. These presentations will take place in the following locations:

Great Falls – January 13, 2006

Sidney – January 18, 2006

Missoula – January 25, 2006

The trainings are designed for all personnel involved in health and prevention of risk behaviors in the public and private school systems, to include school nurses, health enhancement teachers, after-school network staff, school bus drivers and any interested school administrators and/or teaching staff.

Registration flyers will be sent to health enhancement personnel in the applicable school districts within the next week. To register early, contact Marion Erp, (406) 444-1951, or email merp@mt.gov.

For more information, contact [Marion Erp](#), (406)444-1951. 

Reviews Due February 1

Submitted by Christine Emerson on 12/30/05.

The annual Meal Counting and Claiming Self-Review and the second Afterschool Snack Program Review are due to be completed by February 1st (as applicable). These forms can be downloaded at www.opi.mt.gov/schoolfood/index.html; click on "Lunch, Breakfast, Snacks and Milk" and look under the "Meal Counting" pull-down menu and the "Afterschool Snack Program Packet" section, respectively.

For more information, contact [Christine Emerson](#), (406)444-2501. 

Reimbursement Claim Reminders

Submitted by Christine Emerson on 12/30/05.

- Claims are due by the 10th of the month following the claim month and will be paid during the month of submission.
- Claims can be submitted starting on the 1st day of the month following the claim month.
- All claims must be submitted within 60 days from the last day of the month of claim. Claims submitted 60 days past the end of the claim month will not be paid.
- Claims cannot be submitted for the current month or the month ahead.
- Claims for months with fewer than 10 serving days (for example June combined with May or August combined with September) should be combined with the claim for the previous or following month and submitted as one reimbursement unless the claim exceeds 30 days. A reimbursement claim cannot exceed 30 days.

For more information, contact [Christine Emerson](#), (406)444-2501. 

FREE School Wellness Policy Workshop

Submitted by Christine Emerson on 12/30/05.

The OPI School Nutrition Programs is hosting an interactive video conference at 10 sites around Montana on January 26, 2006 from 1:00 p.m. - 4:30 p.m. The conference is entitled "School Wellness: What Does it Mean for Montana Schools?" and sites are Billings, Bozeman, Browning, Colstrip, Glasgow, Great Falls, Havre, Helena, Kalispell, and Missoula. The workshop is designed to review the policy requirements, answer questions, and provide examples of implementation and evaluation process. This workshop is FREE, but pre-registration is required. A registration form will be sent to all school districts in early January.

For more information, contact [Katie Bark](#), (406) 994-5641. 

Montana Lunchline

Submitted by Christine Emerson on 12/30/05.

This electronic listserve is a great way to stay connected with OPI School Nutrition staff and learn from other foodservice managers about school nutrition issues. You will receive current information concerning school nutrition programs, recipes, and ideas to market and promote healthful foods and beverages. All you need to participate is an e-mail address.

For more information, contact [Katie Bark](#), (406) 994-5641.



ServSafe Food Safety Education Classes

Submitted by Christine Emerson on 12/30/05.

In order to help ensure that proper food safety practices are followed by food service staff, it is recommended that they attend the National Restaurant Association's ServSafe courses at least once every five years. The manager/director should become ServSafe certified by taking the 8-hour Servsafe course and all other employees should take the 4-hour ServSafe course. These courses are offered by local county health departments, Montana State University Extension Service, Sysco, and Food Services of America. For a listing of ServSafe classes for 2006, contact the Team Nutrition Program.

For more information, contact [Anne Schumacher](#), (406) 994-5641.



Food Safety Inspection Requirements

Submitted by Christine Emerson on 12/30/05.

As of July 1, 2005, each school participating in the School Nutrition Programs must obtain at least two food safety inspections each school year. The inspections must be conducted by a state or local governmental agency responsible for food safety inspections. In addition, schools must post, in a publicly visible location, a report on the most recent food safety inspection, and provide a copy of the food safety inspection report to a member of the public upon request. There is a prototype letter that schools can use to notify their county sanitarians of this requirement. It is available at www.opi.mt.gov/schoolfood/index. Click on "Lunch, Breakfast, Snacks, and Milk" and scroll down to the "Food Safety" menu.

For more information, contact [Christine Emerson](#), (406) 444-2501.



School Wellness Opportunity: Big Sky Fit Kids

Submitted by Christine Emerson on 12/30/05.

Montana's Big Sky State Games is proud to sponsor Big Sky Fit Kids; similar to its successful adult program - Shape Up Montana (see the next entry). Big Sky Fit Kids is a FREE team wellness program for youth teams (school classes, 4-H clubs, after-school programs, church groups, etc.) that encourages healthful eating and physical activity. The program runs February 1 - May 2 and is based on accumulated activity. At the conclusion of the program teams are eligible to win one of three \$500 awards. For more information go to <http://www.bigskygames.org/shapeup/bigskyfitkids/>

For more information, contact [Suzie Eades Wood](#), (406) 254-7426.



School Wellness Opportunity: Shape Up Montana!

Submitted by Christine Emerson on 12/30/05.

Sponsored by Montana's Big Sky State Games, Shape Up Montana is a fun, FREE, interactive team competition that runs from February 1 - May 1. Shape Up Montana is similar to Big Sky Fit Kids, and encourages Montanans to develop healthy physical activity and eating habits. The teams are made up of four to ten people. For more information go to <http://www.bigskygames.org/shapeup/>

For more information, contact [Suzie Eades Wood](#), 406-254-7426. 

Annual Food and Nutrition Awards

Submitted by Christine Emerson on 12/30/05.

The Montana State Advisory Council on Food and Nutrition was established to implement the policy of Montana, that all citizens should have access to food programs and nutrition services to prevent any needy citizen from experiencing hunger and poor nutrition and their impact on physical and mental health.

Each year, the State Advisory Council on Food and Nutrition recognizes public and private actions and individuals who significantly contribute to the reduction of hunger and/or the improvement of nutritional status in Montana. The deadline for nominations to be received is FRIDAY, JANUARY 20, 2006.

For more information, contact [Ann Hagen-Buss, CACFP](#), (406) 444-2674 or (888) 307-9333. 

Best Practice Awards deadline April 15, 2006

Submitted by Christine Emerson on 12/30/05.

The deadline to submit nominations for the Best Practice Awards to School Nutrition Programs is April 15. The three categories include: Reaching Needy Children in the Summer, Increasing School Breakfast Program Access, and Improving the Healthy School Nutrition Environment.

For more information, contact [Christine Emerson](#), (406)444-2501. 

HIVAIDS/STD Teacher Training in Stanford – January 27

Submitted by Susan Court on 12/30/05.

An HIV/AIDS/STD teacher training will be held in Stanford on Friday, January 27 from 12:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. Information and updates regarding bloodborne pathogens, worksite safety and teaching strategies for use within a K-12 HIV/AIDS unit will be presented. Any teachers from surrounding school districts who are interested in attending should register with Susan Court at 444-3178 or scourt@mt.gov by January 20.

For more information, contact [Susan Court](#), (406)444-3178. 

2006 School Health Profiles - Coming

Submitted by Susan Court on 12/30/05.

2006 School Health Profiles - Coming

The 2006 School Health Profiles (Profiles) will be sent to principals and the lead health educator in February. The Profiles is a short, 10-minute questionnaire that provides an assessment of school health policies and program implementation. Since 1994 the Montana Office of Public Instruction and Montana schools have participated in the Profiles, with typically over 90 percent of principals and health educators returning completed questionnaires.

For more information, contact [Susan Court](#), 444-3178. 

2004 School Health Profiles - Released

Submitted by Susan Court on 12/30/05.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recently released the 2004 School Health Profiles data that includes Montana and U.S. comparisons. The updates are located at www.opi.mt.gov/shp.

For more information, contact [Susan Court](#), (406)444-3178.



Indian Education for All Montanans

Resources and Funding

Submitted by Lynn Hinch on 12/30/05.

Since July 1, 2005, OPI has worked to implement Indian Education for All through curriculum development activities, professional development, and grants awards. New staff members involved in these efforts are Dr. Martha Many Gray Horses, Mandy Smoker Broaddus, and Denise Juneau, who will begin as the Director of Indian Education on January 3rd.

By the beginning of 2006, 17 school districts that have been awarded Ready-to-Go grants will begin work on exciting projects to produce resources for all schools in Montana. These districts will participate in professional development activities currently in the planning stage for the spring and summer. Information regarding professional development will be sent to all districts when available. Another round of awards for these grants will be made in the spring. Research grants for graduate students in Montana universities will be made available in January of 2006. For information contact Martha Many Gray Horses at MarthaMGH@mt.gov.

At the December special session of the Montana legislature, additional funding for Indian education was approved: \$7 million in one-time funding and \$3 million ongoing funding to implement Indian Education for All. The funding will be allocated on the basis of ANB to school districts. Approximately three million dollars, or \$200 per student, will be allocated to districts serving American Indian students to address their educational needs. The money will become available July 1, 2006. OPI is looking forward to joining with Montana school districts in this historic opportunity to address issues in Indian Education for All and the achievement of American Indian students in our schools.

For more information, contact [Joan Franke](#), (406)444-3694.



Information Technology Services

Email Address Changes

Submitted by Gale Kramlick on 12/30/05.

Please note that the e-mail extension for all OPI and State of Montana employees is now @mt.gov instead of @state.mt.us. For the remainder of 2005, both extensions are active, but after December 31, 2005, only the mt.gov extension will be operational. Also note that the OPI webpage address is now <http://www.opi.mt.gov>

For more information, contact [Bob Morris](#), 406-444-3031.



School Finance

2006 Elections Calendar

Submitted by Denise Ulberg on 12/30/05.

The calendar for the May 2, 2006 trustee and general fund election has been updated and is posted at <http://www.opi.mt.gov/PDF/SchoolFinance/forms/ElectionCalendar.pdf>

For more information, contact [Mike Waterman](#), (406) 44404524. 

Additional Technology Grants to be Distributed in January

Submitted by Denise Ulberg on 12/30/05.

The Office of Public Instruction has recently received word that additional timber revenue is available for distribution to schools. OPI will be distributing approximately \$477,000 in technology grants (aka "Timber Technology" money) to schools in the January payment. The payment will be deposited into the district's Technology Fund (28) on January 25 using revenue code 3281.

The payment is not required to be spent within the year received. However, districts must adopt a budget amendment in the Technology Fund if they intend to spend the payment in FY06, since the technology fund budget adopted in August 2005 does not include this payment. A budget amendment packet is available at

<http://www.opi.state.mt.us/pdf/schoolfinance/forms/2002bapacket.pdf> (Contact Nica Carte (406) 444-4401 or ncarte@mt.gov for more information about budget amendments.) For more information about the Technology Fund, see MCA 20-9-534.

For more information, contact [Bonnie Maze](#), (406) 444-3249. 

OPI to Provide FY2006-07 Budgeting Tools Soon

Submitted by Denise Ulberg on 12/30/05.

The School Finance Division is updating the General Fund Budget Spreadsheet for funding changes passed in the 2005 special session. The spreadsheet will help districts to estimate the FY2006-07 general fund budget using the new entitlements now allowed in law. Watch your email for availability of this important budgeting tool.

For more information, contact [Bonnie Maze](#), (406) 444-3249. 

TR-5 & TR-6 Forms Posted on the OPI Website

Submitted by Denise Ulberg on 12/30/05.

TR-5 (Individual Transportation Contract Reimbursement) and TR-6 (Bus Route Reimbursement) Forms will be posted on the OPI website soon – watch your email for availability of the forms. Districts should print the pre-filled documents, make copies and distribute to the same entities as in the past. These forms are due to the County Superintendent by February 1 and to the OPI by February 15.

For more information, contact [Maxine Mougéot](#), (406) 444-3096. 

2nd Semester Bus Inspections Due 1/31/2006

Submitted by Denise Ulberg on 12/30/05.

Buses must pass inspection by January 31, 2006 to receive full funding for the second semester. Preprinted forms are posted on the OPI website at <http://www.metnet.state.mt.us/schoolfinance/0000D9D9-80000007/0001BC9C-80000007/> Remember to send copies of the inspections from the Montana Highway Patrolmen to OPI and to your County Superintendent.

For more information, contact [Maxine Mougeot](#), (406) 444-3096. 

FY 2007 Impact Aid Applications Due 1/31/2006

Submitted by Denise Ulberg on 12/30/05.

The deadline for submitting FY 2007 Impact Aid applications is January 31, 2006. Applying districts are encouraged to submit the application using the U.S. Department of Education's on-line grant application system, "e-Application." The web address for e-Application is <http://e-grants.ed.gov> Please make all efforts to submit the application to the U.S. Department of Education by the deadline to avoid reductions in FY 2007 payments. Late applications submitted within 60 days after the deadline will result in payments reduced by 10 percent. Applications received after the 60-day late window cannot be accepted.

For more information, contact [Mike Waterman](#), (406) 444-4524. 

Spring Enrollment Count – Due to OPI by February 7, 2006

Submitted by Denise Ulberg on 12/30/05.

The Spring Enrollment count date is Wednesday, February 1, 2006. Most districts will submit their enrollment reports to OPI using the MAEFAIRS electronic reporting system. Paper filers will receive their blank reports by mail. Enrollment and ANB information is posted at: <http://www.opi.mt.gov/pdf/SchoolFinance/forms/EnrollHelp.pdf> If February 1 is not a school day for a school in your district (maybe it's a snow day?), please report enrollment on the following school day.

For more information, contact [Nica Carte](#), (406) 444-4401. 

Special Education

Other Education News

Montana Telecommunications Association Scholarships

Submitted by Sue Tinsley on 12/30/05.

The Montana Telecommunications Association (MTA) has available two \$750 Memorial Scholarships and two \$750 Showcase Scholarships. The Memorial Scholarships is designed for any Montana student. All applications must be postmarked by March 31, 2006. The Showcase scholarship is designed for dependents of full or part-time employees, current director, or owners of an independent local exchange carrier in Montana. All applications must be postmarked my March 1, 2006. For scholarship rules and applications go to <http://www.telecomassn.org/Scholarship%20Index.html>

For more information, contact [Angela Joki](#), (406) 442-4316. 

Remarkable Teacher Opportunity

Submitted by Sue Tinsley on 12/30/05.

Kinder Excellence in Teaching Award; A \$100,000 cash prize, the largest unrestricted k-12 teacher award in U.S. History, will be awarded to a teacher in a underserved community. The award seeks to recognize innovative and results – oriented teaching and to raise public awareness of the importance of effective and committed teachers. Nominations must be submitted by February 1, 2006 at www.kinderaward.org.

For more information, contact [Catherine North](#), (415) 503-8654. 

Seventh Annual National School Change Awards

Submitted by Spencer Sartorius on 12/30/05.

The Change Awards are sponsored by the American Association of School Administrators (AASA), the Fordham University Graduate School of Education and Pearson Education. Nominated schools measure themselves against 16 specific criteria and consider the degree to which they have improved, grown, and significantly changed. An award ceremony is conducted in New York City each July at which 24 finalists are saluted and six winning schools presented a check for \$5,000. Application forms and additional information can be found at www.npli.org/nsca.htm. The deadline for materials to be submitted is March 3, 2006.

For more information, contact [Spencer Sartorius](#), (406) 444-4434. 

Hewlett Packard Grant Opportunity

Submitted by Gale Kramlick on 12/30/05.

In 2006, HP will award over \$8 million in cash and equipment to schools in the U.S. and Puerto Rico. The HP Technology for Teaching Grant Initiative is designed to support the innovative use of mobile technology in K-16 education and to help identify K-12 public schools and two- and four-year colleges and universities that HP might support with future grants.

Timelines

Monday, January 2, 2006 - Application process begins

Wednesday, February 15, 2006 - Deadline for submitting proposals

Monday, May 1, 2006 - Award announcements will be made

Please visit the following web site for more information about this grant opportunity.

http://grants.hp.com/us/programs/tech_teaching/index.html

For more information, contact [Ken Keller](#), 406-495-CORE (2673) x1055. 

Tech Talks

Submitted by Michael Hall on 12/30/05.

Tech Talks 2006

Tech Talks provide a forum for teachers, techies and those interested in technology integration across the curriculum to share, discuss and learn from others about important topics related to our work. Generally there is a topic and/or presentation selected which will cover the first hour of the teleconference (discussion included) with the second hour being devoted to discussion among the participants. The Tech Talks are posted on the OPI calendar which can be found by clicking on the Calendar tab above the "Programs and Services of OPI" bar of the OPI Web page at:

<http://www.opi.mt.gov/> . For each of the dates listed below, there will be a listing indicating the

time, video conference site locations and topic(s). If you are interested in viewing the video conference at another Vision Net location not listed, contact Michael Hall at the e-mail address listed below.

The Tech Talk Schedule is:

January 17, 2006 3:00 - 5:00 p.m.

Dr. Dennis Harper will discuss the advantages of preparing students to help support district and school technology efforts. This includes teaching students how to help teachers infuse technology into their lessons (professional development), preparing student peer mentors to ensure that all middle school students are technology literate, and providing resources for students to help maintain the school's hardware, software and network infrastructure. Tech Yes (www.genyes.org)

February 28, 2006 3:00 - 5:00 p.m.

Liz Cunningham will discuss Montana created technology enhanced lesson plans that are available to Montana educators and the Intel Teach To the Future professional development program through which they were created.

April 25, 2006 3:00 - 5:00 p.m. -Topic to be determined.

For more information, contact [Michael Hall](#), 406-444-4422.



Grant Opportunity

Submitted by Kathy Bramer on 12/30/05.

The Montana Fund for Tolerance seeks proposals from schools and nonprofit organizations that promote tolerance and combat bigotry and discrimination. The Fund is interested in projects that:

- encourage interaction between youth of different backgrounds or orientations;
- help them explore their own and others' attitudes and prejudices; or
- train teachers and other adults how to address intolerance, bigotry, and/or bullying among youth.

"Celebrate diversity" projects are not encouraged; rather, projects should address head-on negative attitudes that are harmful or discriminatory. Grants range is \$2,000 to \$5,000; proposals are due February 28. A downloadable application form will soon be posted on the web site at www.mtcf.org.


For more information, contact [Michele Herrington](#), 406-443-8313.



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